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Exploring the Relationship between Choice of Study Medium and Information Seeking Behaviour of Students

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this research was to evaluate the connection between the information-seeking behaviour (ISB) of students of post-graduation and the medium of their study. The sample size was 378 post-graduate students randomly taken through a lottery method from the selected faculties of Rajasthan University, Jaipur. Descriptive survey design was used for the research. Data collection was done by utilizing a self-structured questionnaire (online). The study's results, revealed that there is a significant effect of the medium of study on the way of information- searching by PG students. Specifically, the medium of study showed a significant association with library-related aspects, such as purposes of library use, library usage, consulted sources of information and time spent at library by students. However, the medium of study is not significantly influence the factors like the purpose of seeking information, purpose-wise internet usage, browsing of various e-resources, and the extent of use of internet.

The implications of these findings extend to research and practice in psychology, particularly in the domains of education, library science, cognitive development, performance appraisal etc.

Key words : Exploring Information, Internet Surfing, Library, University Students, Hindi & English Medium Students, Influence, Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, information stands as a pivotal tool for individual development, indispensable for both personal and professional growth. The manner in which individuals employ various methods, approaches, and patterns to seek and utilize information is termed as information seeking behaviour (Manjunath and Babu, 2018). This behaviour reflects people's intention to bridge knowledge gaps (El Maamiry, 2016), influenced by a myriad of personal, emotional, educational, and social factors (Kumari & Sharma, 2014). Given the diverse information needs and seeking methods among different demographic groups, it becomes imperative to understand the specific requirements and behaviours of various users in order to efficiently provide them with tailored information.

The proliferation of information across different domains has ushered in an 'era of information' characterized by an unprecedented 'information explosion'. Consequently, there is a pressing need to

identify the underlying needs driving information seeking behaviors among diverse user groups. Such insights can equip educationists and policymakers with a comprehensive understanding of behavioral patterns, facilitating the timely dissemination of need-based information.

Moreover, information serves as a cornerstone for the academic and holistic development of students. Ismaila (2019) underscores its significance as a vital resource in this regard. Chayal and Vatta (2021) conducted a study on academic information needs of the PG students, study revealed that majority of students required information at very high extent related to curricular activities (70%), career counseling and employment (65%) followed by competitive examinations (57.75%) and research work (47.50%) etc.. However, students' information needs vary due to distinct attributes and requirements. Students adopt multiple approaches for searching, researching, selecting, and sharing information, often drawing from diverse sources including libraries (Khan and Khan, 2020).

The information-seeking behavior of students is influenced by a multitude of factors such as personality traits, educational background, field of study, academic environment, and the medium of instruction (Ahmed and Sheikh, 2019; Pinto *et al.*, 2014). For instance, studies by Ozowa and Aba (2017) and Desta et al., (2017) highlight the impact of course of study and personality traits on students' information-seeking behaviour. Recognizing students as pivotal stakeholders in educational institutions, it becomes paramount for universities to deliver pertinent information in a timely and accurate manner.

Research conducted by Chodha and Gupta (2017) at the National Institute of Technology in Jalandhar, India, underscores the importance of assessing students' information-seeking behaviour to enhance resource relevance and user satisfaction. Such endeavors aid in developing strategies and improving information services to meet students' needs effectively. By furnishing accurate and reliable information promptly, educational institutions contribute significantly to students' overall development while optimizing resource utilization.

Therefore, the present study endeavors to evaluate students' information-seeking behaviour, focusing particularly on the influence of the medium of instruction. Given the pivotal role of the medium of instruction in shaping academic experiences, this study is essential for refining information services and catering to the specific requirements of students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present research was conducted at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. This university is a largest and oldest state University of Rajasthan. Students enrolled in Post graduates' degree programmes of Humanities, Social Science and Law streams for the academic year 2019-2020 of Rajasthan University of Jaipur were the respondents of the study. Present study was completed in 2022. 464 students were selected from the selected faculties of the university by applying random sampling method. Sample size was calculated through Yamane's formula. Sampling was done in 3 stages i.e., selection of the university (1st stage), selection of the faculties (2nd stage) and selection of sample (3rdstage). At the first stage University of Rajasthan was selected purposively and faculties from this university were also selected through purposive sampling method. For the sample selection,

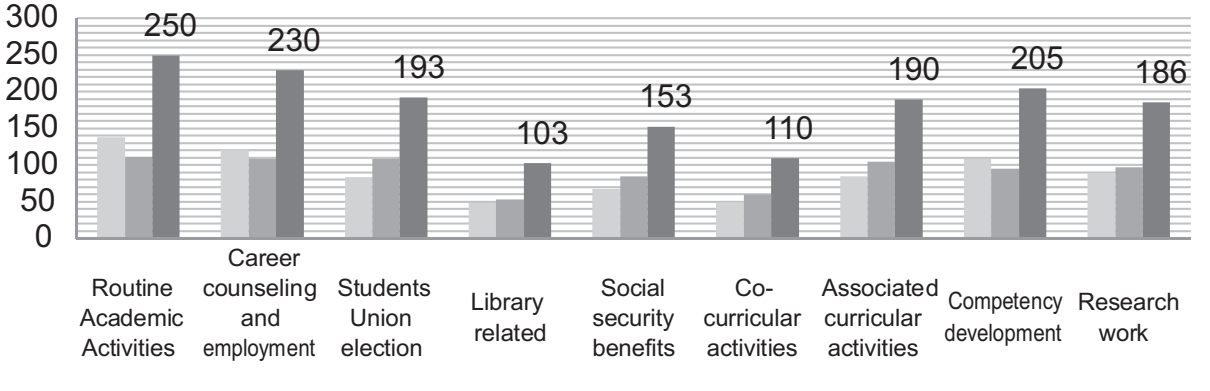
first of all, a list of admitted students for the session 2019-2020 was taken from all the selected faculties/departments of the university. Afterwards, two separate lists of boys and girls were prepared, and then the random sampling technique (lottery method) was applied to ensure an equal number of boys and girls in the selected sample. Self-developed tool (online questionnaire) was used for collection of the data. Reliability and Validity of the tool was also tested. Tool was given to 25 subject experts for content validation and to check the accuracy and language of questions. After validation of questionnaire, pre- testing of the tool was done with identified sample (not included in final sample) to check the understanding level of questions, formatting and clarity of language etc. This was also found reliable as the reliability coefficient for the structured questionnaire was 0.85. Tool was distributed via whatsapp and e-mails to 478 students. 378 questionnaires (completed) were returned, with an 81.46 per cent response rate. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Medium of the study was independent variable and Information seeking behaviour was dependent variable of the study. Hypothesis made in null form. Chi-square test was used to assess the association between information seeking behaviour and medium of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The association between independent variable (medium of study) and information seeking behavior (dependent variable) is presented below. Purpose of seeking information, information sources consulted, purpose of use of library, time spent in library, browsing of different e-resources (e-books, e-journals, digital library), and extent of usage of the internet were the major aspects of the information seeking behaviour of student.

Medium and Purpose-wise seeking information

Figure1 shows the association between medium and the purpose-wise seeking information by the respondents.



	Routine Academic Activities	Career counseling and employment	Students Union election	Library related	Social security benefits	Co-curricular activities	Associated curricular activities	Competency development	Research work
English	138	121	84	49	68	50	85	109	89
Hindi	112	109	109	54	85	60	105	96	97
Total	250	230	193	103	153	110	190	205	186

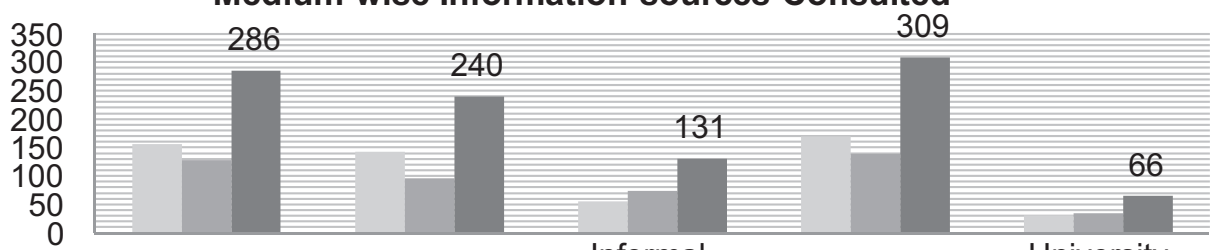
Fig.1 Medium and Purpose-wise seeking information

X^2 value=12.1746, df=8, P-Value -.143579. *Not* significant

According to Fig. 1, Students who were from English medium were more inclined to find information about their daily academic work (55.2%), job and career-related advice (52.6%), and competency potential (53.2%). The majority of those respondents desired information regarding student elections (56.5%), extracurricular activities (54.6%), social security benefits (55.7%) and library facilities (52.4%) were from Hindi medium. The Studies revealed that there was not any significant difference between the medium of instructions to the participants and the various objectives. It's a good test because the P value (0.143579) is greater than the 8 degrees of freedom significance level (0.10). Therefore, the null hypothesis must be accepted. It indicates a relationship between different comparisons. Therefore, we conclude that the medium of study did not influence participants' information-seeking goals.

Medium-wise information sources consulted

Figure 2 shows the comparison of medium and type of information sources consulted by the respondents.



	Library	Faculty	Informal sources	Internet	University administration
English	157	143	56	170	31
Hindi	129	97	75	139	35
Total	286	240	131	309	66

Fig.2 Medium-wise information sources consulted

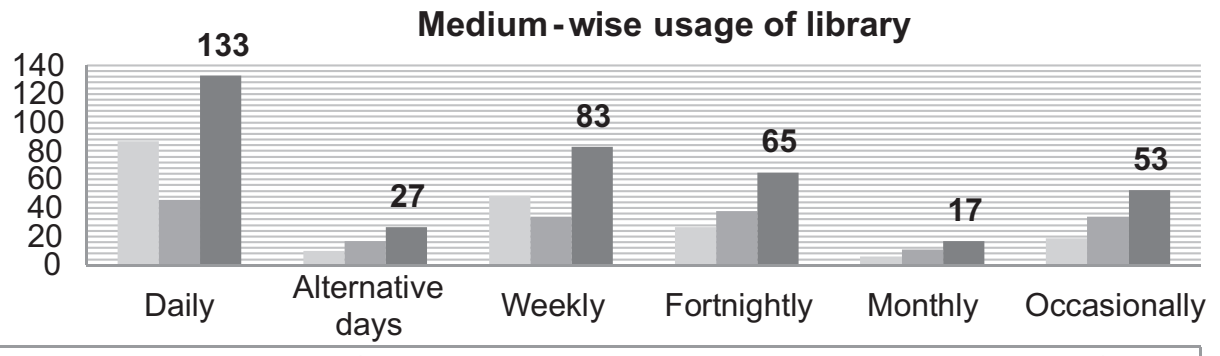
X^2 value= 11.2214 df=4, P Value - .024185. Significant (p < .05.)

Fig. 2, shows that out of 286 respondents who preferred academic libraries, 54.9 per cent were studying in English and 45.1 per cent were studying in Hindi. 240 respondents who consulted teachers 59.6 per cent were studying in English and 40.4 per cent were studying in Hindi. The percentage of Hindi and English medium respondents who consulted personal contacts such as family and friends were 57.2 per cent and 42.6 per cent respectively. 55 per cent of internet users were from English medium. In comparison, 53 per cent of college survey respondents were educated in Hindi. A further finding conclusively indicates that there is a significant difference between the medium of instructions and such data sources referred to. As the P value (.024185) is less than 4 degrees of freedom (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis must be rejected. Results showed that teachers (faculty) were more consulted by English-medium students and informal sources were more consulted by Hindi-medium students. This might be due to the different personality characteristics of the students. English-

medium students could be more confident or have less hesitation in communicating with faculty and other university administration sources than Hindi-medium students.

Medium-wise usage of library

Figure 3 explores the relation between medium of study among the responders and periodicity of libraries usage in a university environment.



	Daily	Alternative days	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Occasionally
English	87	10	49	27	6	19
Hindi	46	17	34	38	11	34
Total	133	27	83	65	17	53

Fig. 3 Medium-wise usage of library

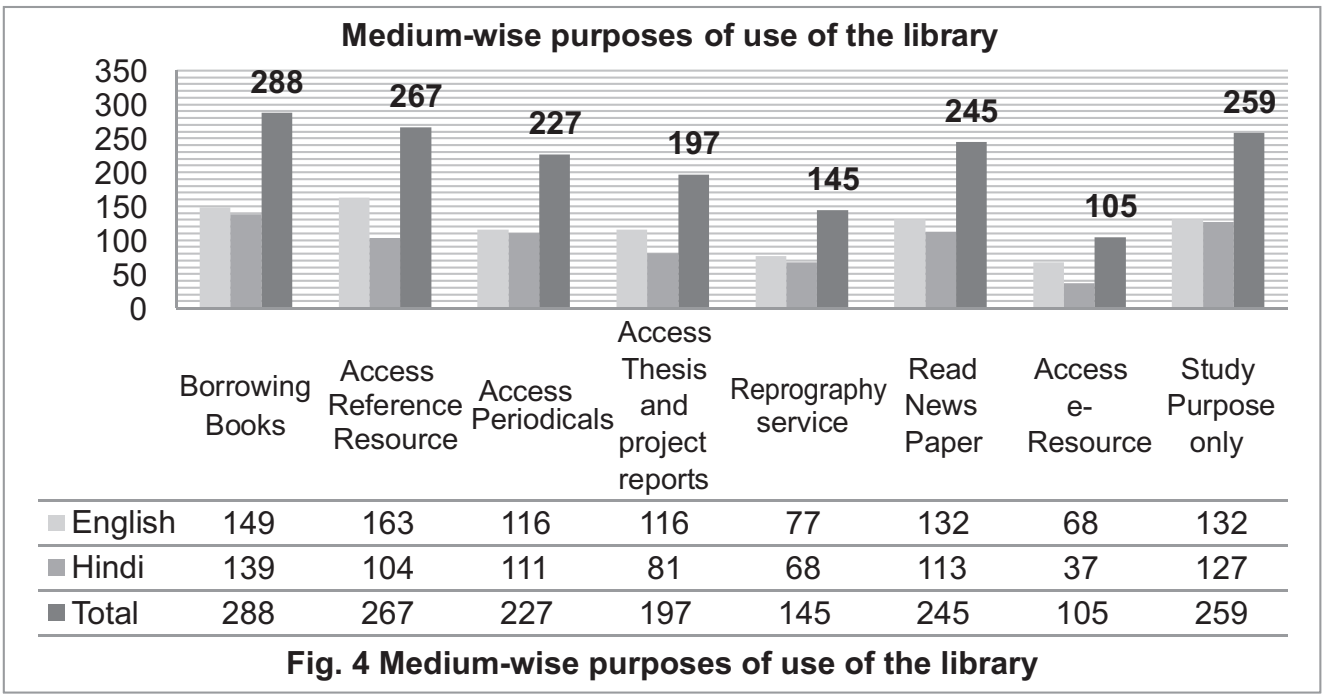
X^2 value= 23.9393 df=5, P-Value .00022. Significant (p < .01.)

Fig. 3 shows that out of 133 respondents, who use the library on a daily basis, 65.4 per cent were from English medium and 34.6 per cent were Hindi medium students. Of the 27 participants who use the library every day, 62.9 per cent were study in Hindi and 40.9 per cent were study in English. Further of the 83 participants, who use the library every week, 59 % were learning in English and 40.9 per cent are learning in Hindi. The proportion respondents intend to visit the library bi-weekly, monthly and occasionally is skewed towards Hindi-medium respondents. The information in Fig. 3 reveals clearly that English-medium student's visits the library more than Hindi medium students. This may be because more availability of English books than Hindi. In addition, the outcomes further indicated that there is a large difference between the average and frequency of library usage, because the P value (.00022) is less than 5 degrees of freedom (0.01). Therefore, the null hypothesis must be rejected. Results related to the frequency of library visits showed that daily and weekly visits were done by English-medium students more than Hindi-medium students. Therefore, the study area revealed that, as compared to Hindi-medium students, a large number of English-medium students visit the library more than Hindi-medium students. This might be due to the increased availability of books and other literature in English in the library.

Medium-wise purposes of use of the library

As can be seen from Fig-4, most of the 288 participants (51.7%) who borrowed books from the library were studying in English. Of the 227 respondents who used the library to access journals, 51.1 per cent were studying in English and 48.9 per cent were studying in Hindi. Of the participants who went to the library to assess reference materials, 61.1 he

per cent were studying in English and 38.9 per cent were studied in Hindi. Among the 197 respondents who visited the library for articles and publications, the percentage of those using English was higher on average (58.9%) than those using Hindi (41.1%). Identical effects were noted when reading newspapers and using online resources. In addition, the number of students in both environments is similar and they visit the library only to study.



	Borrowing Books	Access Reference Resource	Access Periodicals	Access Thesis and project reports	Reprography service	Read News Paper	Access e-Resource	Study Purpose only
English	149	163	116	116	77	132	68	132
Hindi	139	104	111	81	68	113	37	127
Total	288	267	227	197	145	245	105	259

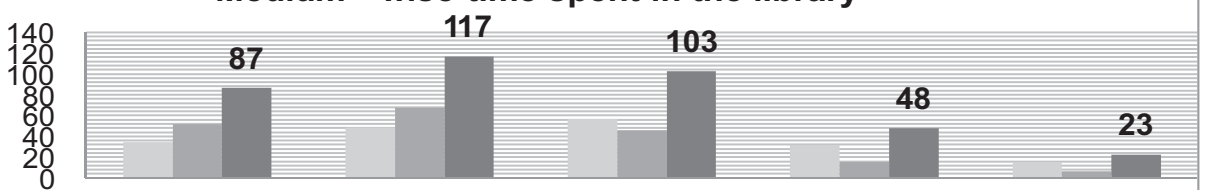
Fig. 4 Medium-wise purposes of use of the library

X^2 value=13.86, df=7, P-Value - .0537. Significant ($p < .10$.)

As can be seen from the above Fig.4, Additionally, there a marginally significant difference between the medium of instruction in terms of their different purposes of use of the libraries. The P-value (0.0537) is less than the significance level (0.10) at 7 degrees of freedom, hence it is statistically defensible. As a result, the null hypothesis must be rejected. It implies that there is a link between the variables being compared. As a result, study found that the medium is linked to the respondents' purposes for visiting libraries. Chayal et al. (2023) also stated that stream of the study influence the library use behaviour of the PG students..

Medium-wise time spent in the libraries

Fig.5 clearly shows that there was a considerable difference in the medium of instruction and the total number of hours spent in the library. These findings indicate that most of the respondents (59.7%) who made use of the library longer than an hour per day were studying in Hindi. Of the 117 respondents who spent one to two hours visiting the library every day, 58.1 per cent were Hindi students and 41.9 per cent were English medium students. Of the 103 participants who spent two to three hours in the library every day, 55.3 per cent studied in English and 44.7 per cent studied in Hindi. The total number of students of English is above the average (66.6%), in comparison, Hindi medium respondents (33.3%) spent three to four hours a day going to the library. A similar trend emerged for spending more than four hours a day at the library.



	0-1 hour	1-2 hours	2-3 hours	3-4 hours	>4
English	35	49	57	32	16
Hindi	52	68	46	16	7
Total	87	117	103	48	23

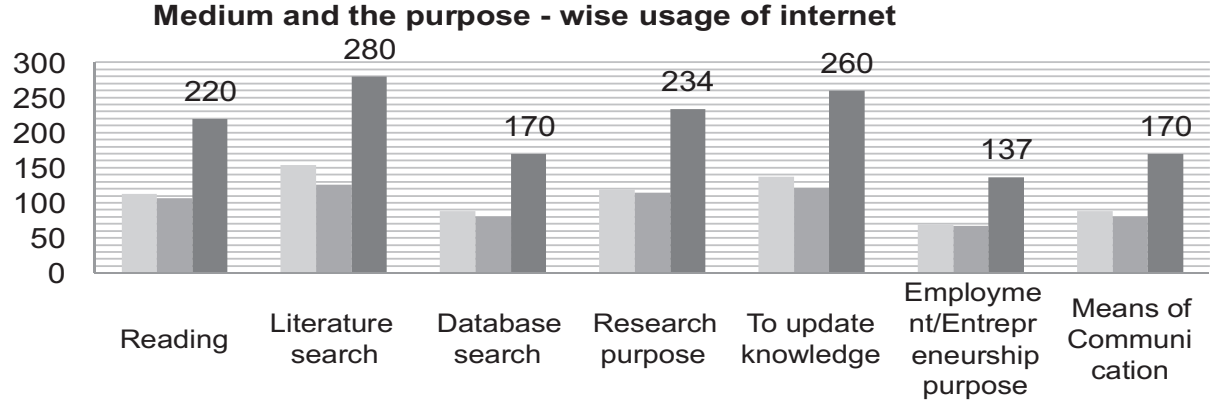
Fig. 5 Medium-wise time spent in the library

X^2 value=16.43, df=4, P-Value- .00248. Significant (p < .01.)

From the Fig. 5 based on the findings there was a considerable difference in the medium of instruction and the number of hours spent in the library. In comparison to Hindi medium respondents, English medium respondents spent more time in the library. The P-value (.00248) is less than the significance level (0.01) at 4 degrees of freedom; hence it can be statistically supported. According to result, the null hypothesis must be rejected. It implies that there is a relation between the variables being compared. From above, English medium students spent more time in the library, probably because the free website provides unlimited Internet access. Since the curriculum is predominantly English, access to electronic resources is also available. The study shows that English-medium students spend more time in the library, possibly because of the availability of free internet services that provide unlimited access to e-content and literature in English language more. The study here recommended that the library be equipped with need-based resources for Hindi-medium students too.

Medium and the purpose-wise usage of internet

Fig.6 shows the association between the respondents' medium and the purpose-wise access to the internet by the respondents.



	Reading	Literature search	Database search	Research purpose	To update knowledge	Employment/Entrepreneurship purpose	Means of Communication
English	113	154	89	119	138	69	89
Hindi	107	126	81	115	122	68	81
Total	220	280	170	234	260	137	170

Fig. 6 Medium and the purpose-wise access to the internet

X^2 value= 1.3531, df=6, P-Value -0.9686. Not significant

Fig. 6, revealed that 51.4 per cent of the 220 participants who received online education were reading in English and 48.6 per cent were from Hindi medium. Of the 280 students who access to the internet for literature search, 55 per cent were studying in English and 45 per cent in Hindi. 170 respondents who access to the internet to search for information, 52.4 per cent were studying in English and 52.4 per cent were studying in Hindi. majority of respondents access to the internet for research, study, communication and information updating is almost similar in both reports. From above, it is clear that there is non-significant difference between medium of study and the different factors for which users access the Internet. It is as true as real because the P value (0.9686) is above at 6 degrees of freedom (0.10). Therefore, the null hypothesis must be accepted. Thus, it can be stated that the medium is not associated with different purposes of using the internet by the respondents. Results focused that there is not much difference in the purpose of the use of the internet by the both Hindi and English medium students , as both mediums of students are in need of information from the internet for updating of knowledge, communication, literature search, research purposes, etc. Khatri, D. (2022), revealed that students like to access various websites such as Google, Wikipedia, etc. These sources were considered the first source for research work and course reading etc. Although there is not significance difference in the use of e-resources by the Hindi and English medium students but study also revealed that for literature search and to update knowledge English-medium students used the internet and e-resources (e-books, e-periodicals, and journals) higher than Hindi-medium students, it might be due to available literature on the internet is more in English with current updates as compared to Hindi. It could be due to not getting content, e-books, e-journals, or required information in Hindi on the internet.

Medium-wise browsing of E-resources by the respondents

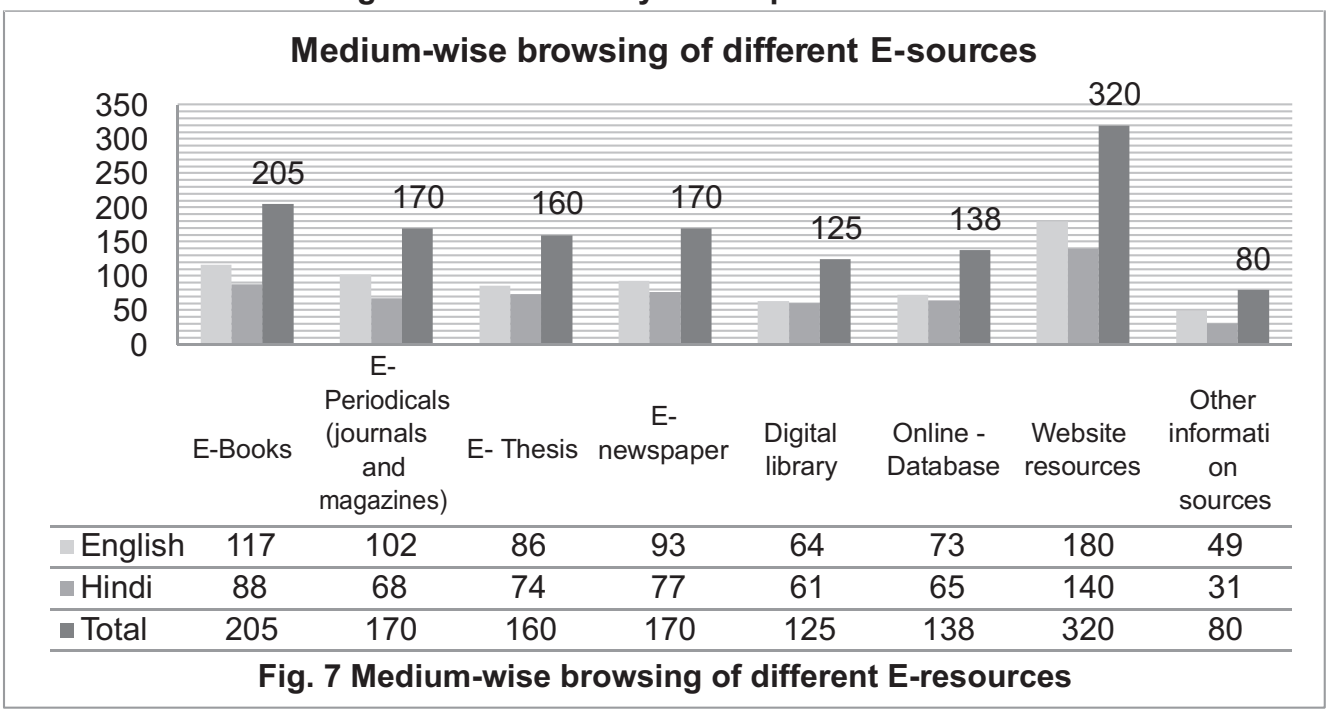
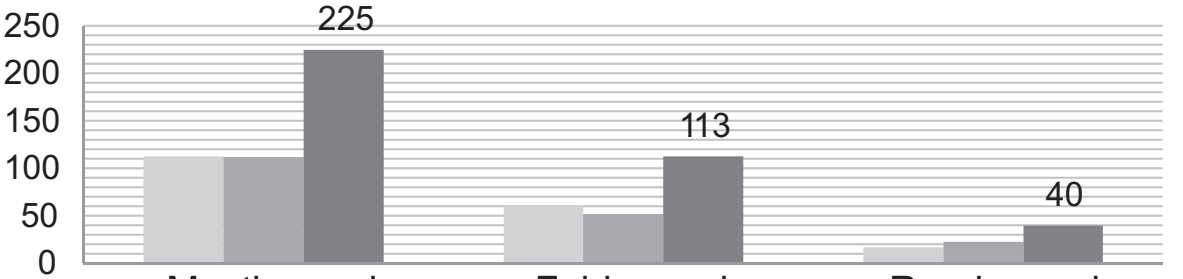


Fig. 7 Medium-wise browsing of different E-resources

X^2 value=4.23862, df=7, P-Value -0.75191. *Not* significant

Fig.7 indicates that of the 205 respondents who browsed e-books online, a larger number of English-medium respondents (57.1%) than Hindi-medium respondents (42.9%). English-speaking respondents accounted for 60% of all respondents utilizing E-periodicals, while Hindi-medium respondents made up 40%. Regarding the respondents' access to E-thesis (160), over half of them were English medium students (53.9% percent). The use of online databases, digital libraries, websites, and information resources was observed to follow a similar pattern. It can be as a result of the preponderance of English content on the internet. Therefore, the findings indicate that there is non-significant difference between the respondents' internet browsing habits and the study medium of the students . Given that the P-value (0.75191) is higher than the significance level (0.10) at seven degrees of freedom, it can be supported statistically. It therefore demands that the null hypothesis be accepted. It can be inferred that the medium is not associated with the various information resources browsed on the internet by the respondents.

Medium-wise extent of E-resources usage



	Mostly used	Fairly used	Rarely used
English	113	61	17
Hindi	112	52	23
Total	225	113	40

Fig. 8 Medium-wise extent of E-resources usage

X^2 value=1.5790, df=2, P-Value - .45404.Not significant

Fig. 8 clearly shows that a comparable proportion of students (50%) from both Hindi and English mediums mostly used e-resources to look up different types of information. Of the 113 respondents, 53.9 per cent studied in the English medium, and 46 per cent in Hindi. These respondents fairly employed e-resources to seek various types of information. Similarly, 57.5% of respondents who seldom used e-resources to find various kinds of information were registered in English-medium. The reason behind there isn't enough reading available online in Hindi for what one needs. The Chi-square test, it reveals that there was no discernible difference between the compared variables, used to evaluate the relationship between the respondents' internet usage extent and medium of study. As the value of P (0.45404) is greater than the significance

level (0.10) at two degrees of freedom, it can be supported statistically. Therefore the null hypothesis must be accepted.

CONCLUSION

From the study, it is concluded that personal attributes and characteristics of the students have significant association with the seeking behaviour of the students. Regarding of medium of the study is a major factor that influence the needs of the information and ISB of the students, as information sources consulted by students, purposes of use of the library, usage of the library and time spent in the library differ from Hindi medium to English medium students. Therefore it is concluded that with the help of these types of studies, information seeking behaviour and information needs of the students can be assessed and accordingly that need based information and information sources can be provide to students. Results can be helpful for the psychologists, educationists, policy makers, and for the University administration gain insight into the behaviour and psychology of postgraduate students to provide the strong and accessible information delivery system to the students.

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